

RECOLLECTIONS OF OLD COLLECTING GROUNDS.

II.—THE LOWER RIO GRANDE VALLEY.

By H. F. WICKHAM, Iowa City, Iowa.

The region about Brownsville, Texas, is one of great interest, but only lately has it been explored entomologically with any degree of care. Within the past two years, however, the country has been visited and worked by Prof. Townsend, Mr. Schwarz and the writer.* Its most striking feature is perhaps to be found in the little jungles or "oases" of tropical vegetation, supporting corresponding insect fauna, these small areas being compassed around by the ordinary flora and fauna of southern Texas.

It is by no means ready of access, since a visit implies either a long trip by steamer from New Orleans or Morgan City, or a cross-country stage ride of some 160 miles from Alice. The latter has the advantage of convenience since the stages are run daily, while the steamer dates are about ten days apart.

The writer made the trip by stage, reaching Brownsville on the evening of June 20th. A heavy rain had laid the dust and refreshed the country so that the broad prairies which alternate with patches of chaparral were gorgeous with many blossoms. But little time was had for collecting along the road, the thirty-six hours of travel consumed in covering the distance being broken only by such short stops as were necessary to change horses and to eat a hasty lunch. Nevertheless, a few observations were made. *Cicindela rectilatera* abounded in swarms near rain puddles; *Canthon laevis* was busily rolling balls about in sandy spots. In the mesquite scrub might now and then be seen a fine specimen of a great black Longhorn, *Stenaspis solitaria*; these, however, disappearing before reaching El Sawz. A short stop at Santa Gertrudes, the first relay station out of Alice, was the occasion of some rejoicing over the capture of a fine example of *Elcodes ventricosa*, one of the largest species of the genus, remarkable for its obese form and shining surface.

No towns are passed through en route, the road running across great ranches thousands of acres in extent. An occasional Mexican hut is about the only sign of human habitation, except at the small settlement of El Sawz and Arroyo. Arrived, finally,

* Cf. Proc. Ent. Soc. Wash. iv, p. 2; Trans. Texas Acad. of Sci., 1895; and Bull. Nat. Hist. State Univ. of Iowa, iv, pp. 96 et seq.

at the journey's end it was a pleasure to meet a fellow-entomologist in the person of Prof. C. H. Tyler Townsend, who had already been in the field for some months. His aid in securing accommodations and readily given information as to the collecting grounds were of material advantage and greatly appreciated. He had already located many of the little tropical oases—if we may give them that name—and had made large and interesting collections in the interests of the Division of Entomology at Washington.

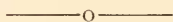
As a result of the explorations carried on, many species not hitherto recognized as inhabitants of the United States must be added to our lists. A few of these may be mentioned here, the remainder will be referred to in the author's report on the Coleoptera of this valley.*

A number of Cicindelidæ were met with, the most interesting of which occurred at Point Isabel along the extensive beaches and salt mud-flats in that neighborhood. *C. severa*, *togata*, *circumpicta* and *pamphila* all inhabit this little strip of sea-coast in company with some more familiar forms. *C. pamphila* is remarkable, from the fact that the elytra exhibit much the same range of variation in ground color as that displayed by the better known *C. sperata*.

Among the Carabidæ, mention should be made of the occurrence of *Calosoma aurocinctum* Chaud., a species resembling our common *scrutator*, but a little smaller and of a brighter clearer green with less pronounced elytral striæ and broader, flatter interspaces. It is a Mexican form and will probably not be found much to the north of Brownville. A large colony of the hitherto very rare *Pogonus texanus* was exposed on turning over a palmetto log lying on a broad mud flat at the Point. A number disappeared at once into seams opened by the sun, but quite a supply was secured. In heavy thickets where the vines made their closest tangles, *Agra oblongopunctata* Chev. was occasionally beaten from some thick mass of foliage. It is an *outré* looking insect of slender form, the prothorax elongate, nearly conical, the narrow elytra deeply punctured in rows. The original locality was Vera Cruz, Mexico. *Micragra anea* is another hitherto extra limital species ranging through Central America to Brazil. It is a small greenish or black-bronzed insect, something like

* Now publishing in the "Bulletin of Natural History," State University of Iowa.

Metabletus in form, occurring on vines. Several specimens of a new Lebiide (*Euproctus texanus* Wickham) were obtained, chiefly in sweepings or by beating. *Callida punctulata* Chaud., was beaten from jungles in company with *C. planulata* and *Pinacodera punctigera*. A single specimen of *Anatrichis oblonga* was found on the river bank. This has hitherto been represented by a single example.



An Egg Parasite of *Smerinthus astylus* Drury.

By WILLIAM H. ASHMEAD.

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I have recently received, for identification, from Mr. R. F. Pearsall, of Brooklyn, N. Y., three specimens of a beautiful little chalcid, reared from the eggs of *Smerinthus astylus* Drury.

This chalcid proved to belong to the subfamily Eupelminæ, in Motschulsky's genus *Anastatus* (= *Antigaster* Walsh) and to be quite different from the several other species described in our fauna. I have, therefore, named it in honor of the discoverer and submit the following description :

Anastatus pearsalli sp. n. ♀.—Length 2.5 mm. Blue-green; the scutellum, middle lobe and the elevated lateral lobes of the mesonotum and the face, including the frons, bronze-green; scape, lobe in front of tegulæ, apex of pronotum and the legs, with the exceptions to be noted, ferruginous; anterior and hind coxæ metallic-blue; anterior femora and tibiæ, except knees and hind legs, except tarsal joints 2 to 3, which are yellowish white, dark brown or fuscous; the middle tibiæ and the tarsal joints 1, 2 and 5 brownish; front wings fuscous, with the basal one-third and two triangular spots opposite each other, the points of which almost meet and form a band just beneath the marginal vein, whitish hyaline; abdomen blue-black, with a white band at apex of first abdominal segment.

Hab.—Brooklyn, N. Y.

Described from three female specimens, bred Aug. 20, 1897, from eggs of *Smerinthus astylus* Drury, by Mr. R. F. Pearsall.

IN THE ENTOMOLOGICAL SECTION. Professor.—“What has become of Bugs? Wasn't he studying with the class last year?”

“Ah, yes; Bugs—poor fellow—a fine student, but absent minded in the use of benzine in cleaning specimens—very. That discoloration on the ceiling—notice it?”

“Yes.”

“That's Bugs.”